

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



HOMEMAkers' CHAT

Thursday, May 22, 1941

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "INSECT QUESTIONS AND OTHERS." Information from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Home Economics, and Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Warm weather certainly encourages insects of all sorts to come out of hiding, and two of our questions today are on that subject. Then there's one about lighting, and one about the water that's left when you cook vegetables. Quite a variety. I'll read our first letter, which was answered by one of the entomologists in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"I have been told that our home grown cereals, particularly whole wheat flour and breakfast food, are more subject to weevils than cereals bought at the store, because they are not sterilized and sealed. Is there any special way to protect our supply? We much prefer these cereals for flavor and food value, and have plenty of them."

Any cereals are subject to insect attack in warm weather. After you open a package of flour, rice, cornmeal, or any other cereal, it's just as liable to become infested with cereal beetles or weevils as your home-grown breakfast food. In fact, if insect eggs were accidentally packed with the cereal, weevils might develop inside the package while it's still sealed.

However, if you put all packaged cereals into clean metal or glass containers with tight lids, immediately after you open the package, and do the same with cereals bought in bulk or home-grown, you reduce the chances of weevil infestation. Look carefully at the paper bags in which flour is sold. The best kind not only have many-layered sides, but have gum-latex tape over the sewed strips at



the top and bottom to keep insects from getting in through the needle holes.

Scald out any cannisters you intend to use for cereals, especially if they have been used before for that purpose. Burn or feed to poultry any cereal you find infested and sterilize the container before you use it again. Also go over the pantry shelves with a stiff brush dipped in soapy hot water to remove any old crumbs of cereal, flour, or bread that may be lodged out of sight, or any dust or lint which might harbor insect eggs.

If possible, don't keep much cereal on hand during hot weather. The flavor of cracked wheat and water-ground corn-meal is much better if they are prepared in small quantities that are used up quickly, and there is less chance of weevils getting into them.

Next question is about black flies,- it's from some people who want to go fishing in the northern New England woods about Decoration Day.

Entomologists say that unfortunately there will be black flies about in swarms all through May and June. These flies are especially annoying to hunters and fishermen and others much in the open, and also to livestock. In the south, where black flies are generally called buffalo gnats, they are more of a pest to livestock, and they also appear there in great numbers in the spring.

The most satisfactory protection of the person from black flies seems to be to rub the hands and face with a mixture of kerosene and oil of pennyroyal in equal parts. If you don't like the smell of kerosene, there's another formula: 1 ounce of castor oil, 2 ounces of oil of pennyroyal, and 3 ounces of refined oil of pine tar. One-two-three-- that's easy to remember.

Here's a question the Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering answered for us. "Does fluorescent lighting cost more or less than other kinds of lighting?"





At the present, while they are very new, fluorescent lighting units are more expensive than the regular bulbs. They require special sockets and a controlling device called an auxiliary. But these units give much more light for the same wattage than ordinary incandescent bulbs, and so the operating cost may be lower than with other types of bulbs. You can get fluorescent units in various colors, including daylight.

Now for a question on the all-important subject of saving food values.

"Whenever I hear or read directions about cooking vegetables nowadays some reference is made to saving the vegetable liquor because of the food materials it contains. But how can I use this vegetable water, besides putting it in soups? Soup isn't very popular with our family, even in winter time. In hot weather it's just out. What else can I do with the vegetable liquors, especially the ones that have a slightly sweet flavor?"

Well, that's a question a good many of us might have asked. In the first place, the Bureau of Home Economics always urges that vegetables be cooked in as little water as possible. Then it's easy to serve this little bit of liquid right along with the vegetable.

Many of the vegetable liquids that do not have a sweet flavor you can thicken easily to make good sauces to serve over the same vegetables that were cooked in the liquid. Or even to add extra flavor to other vegetables. Celery water,-- onion water-- and asparagus water are three of these non-sweet vegetable juices that may be thickened.

As for the vegetable waters that are just a little bit sweet,-- such as the water from carrots or peas,-- have you ever tried making a molded jellied vegetable salad? A salad like this makes a good appetizer course for dinner or supper,-- especially if your family doesn't like soup. You can make these jellied salads from almost any kind of vegetable water, but it is a good way to use the slightly sweet vegetable liquor because the acid in the salad dressing goes well with it.

Time to sign off. More questions and answers next Tuesday.

